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Executive Registra From 7-E-12 Headquarters

# A strange way to get at the facts

Bill Neikirk is a member of The Tribunes Washington Bureau. He is substituting for Jim Squires.

WASHINGTON—President Ford's cabinet-level task force on corporate bribery has begun an inquiry into perhaps the most explosive aspect of the scandal: Did the United States government know our multinational companies were greasing palms around the world?

The answer will be difficult to ferred out, given the nature of the problem and the government's own self-protective instincts. Nobody knows this better than Sen. Frank Church [D., Idaho], whose multinational subcommittee has been looking into the matter for months, with only mild success.

It's a question badly in need of an answer, "You can't propose remedies until you understand the problem," said Dick Darman, an aide to Commerce Secretary Elliot Richardson, who heads the government-wide task force.

BUT THE PRESIDENT'S task force is going about the job of finding out in a strange way. It has asked the "appropriate investigative agencies" to probe the matter for it.

Thus the investigating arms of the

Defense, State and Justice departments will be trying to discover whether the Defense, State, and Justice departments knew about the bribery payments—and in fact, tacitly condoned them.

Also, Darman said, "We've made some inquiries from the CIA." According to former CIA officials and congressional investigators, if any agency had known about the bribe payments in the 1960s and 1970s, it was the CIA. One former top-ranking CIA official said recently an agent wouldn't have been doing his job if he hadn't known about the payoffs.

The task force's motives may be perfectly honorable, but one wonders how realistic it is to expect these agencies, especially the CIA, to rat on themselves, if indeed there was government complicity in the payoffs.

Darman responds by saying the task force's role is limited primarily to making legislative recommendations—not conducting a new investigation. "We're not an investigative body," he said.

Thus the President's inquiry can only invite cynicism about its eventual findings. And that raises an entirely new question: Will we ever find out whether the government was aware of the foreign payoffs and whether they were condoned as an unwritten rule of foreign policy?

The subject is more complex than it appears. As Darman pointed out, complicity can mean anything from general suspicion that payoffs were being made to knowing about specific bribes. He believes that there was at least a low

degree of complicity by the government [knowing about bribes in a general way], but he doubts officials knew about specific payoffs.

Richardson, on the other hand, is reported to feel the U. S. government knew little, if anything. The secretary once served as the No. 2 man in the State Department and had a big hand in foreign policy.

Congressional investigators looking at the issue have concluded that either the State or Defense departments knew about them—or were so unbelievably incompetent that they didn't know about a practice that businesses have described as a "way of life" in some countries.

JAMES AKINS, former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia who led a crusade against bribes and excessive agents' payments in that country, said it was difficult not to be informed about almost everything going on. "Gossip was the main form of entertainment," he said.

In fact, Akins said he had no doubt the British and French governments knew—and quietly condoned—the fact that their companies were making payoffs. The obvious implication is that the U.S. government, seeing the competitive atmosphere, did essentially the same thing.

The facts may never come out completely, but it would be reassuring if they did, for they might provide a needed catharsis and remove forever the use of bribes as a shadowy instrument of foreign policy.

The President's current investigation needs more teeth, more outside input, and more of a determination to get at the facts.

Executive Registry Room 7-E-12 Headquarters (CHENTEN BESSEN FRE Gulde Spice)

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10 May 1976 Date ·

LONDON TIMES 29 APRIL 1976 Ben Evano: Action!

CIA's evasion casts doubts on the integrity of US journalists and others working abroad

## Mr Ford fails to act over spies

From James Reston Washington, April 28

In its censored report on the overseas operations of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Senate intelligence committee confirms that the CIA has been using United States reporters, academics, and even religious leaders as paid spies, but refuses to disclose the names of those involved.

Moreover, according to the committee, this practice is still going on, and all efforts by officials of the universities, churches and the media to get the facts so that the practice can be stopped, have been evaded by the CIA for years.

This raises troubling questions, the Senate committee observes, about preservation of the integrity of American academic institutions. It does more than that; it casts doubt on the operations of all media, religious and academic representatives abroad, without giving their institutions the oppor-tunity of defending themselves against the corruption of their work. Several observations

by the CIA as paid informers.

2. The answer usually given by the CIA was that this practice was common some time ago but had been discontinued at least as far as staff members of the newspapers were con-cerned. Maybe some "stringers" or part-time space rate reporters for American papers were used, but even this was not common CIA pactice.

3. When detailed investiga-tions by the House and Senate intelligence committees disclosed that this was not true

Still the Senate committee report says that the CIA had covert relationships with about covert relationships with about 50 American journalists or employees of United States media organizations until February, 1976, and continues to have relationships with more than half of them.

It adds that more than a dozen United States news organizations and commercial publishing houses formally provided cover for CIA agents abroad. A few of these organizations tions were unaware that they provided this cover.

provided this cover.

This invites the inference that most of these news organizations and commercial publishing houses knowingly provided cover for spies and still do so, thus leaving the reader without a clue as to which news organizations are innocent and which are guilty of misleading the pubic.

A distinction should probably

A distinction should probably be made here between normal against the corruption of their work. Several observations about this were made:

1. For years leading American newspapers have requested and received from the CIA assurances that none of their staff members was being used by the CIA as paid informers.

by made here between normal contacts by reporters with CIA agents, and using reporters as paid CIA agents. American reporters assigned abroad often seek information from CIA officials, and have usually found their information to be accurate, if not always complete. plete

This practice, particularly during the Vietnam war, often led to exchanging of informa-tion between the reporter and the agent, to the benefit of both. But reporters serving as paid agents of the Government is a different matter. Most reporters in Washington, for example, will not accept pay for going on talk shows for the official "Voice of America", lest they seem to be putting out the United States official

Topic agent, to the benefit of their own profession or the essourial work of the CIA, but this does not justify the CIA trying to subvert the press.

Nor does it absolve the intelligence agency, and all he intelligence agency, and all he bas to do is to call George Bush, its director, on the telephone to clear up the mess. the agent, to the benefit of the United S propaganda line.

What is troubling about this

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Still the familie committee to the condens it was does be condens it was does be condens it was does be not condone it, nor does he deny the intelligence committee's report that the practice continues.

The dilemma is that he does not stop it himself or make available, in private if necessary, the information the media, the universities and the churches need to abolish the practice themselves.

It is common practice, of course, for communist govern-ments to use what they call reporters as spies, and vice versa. Even some of the West European governments have used journalists as cover for their agents, but not until the Second World War did the United States Government consciously subvert its own reporters and academics.

The Senate intelligence committee report will now go to Congress for remedial action, and no doubt there will be closer control by Congress over the finances and covert opera-tions of the CIA. But this will

take time. The CIA itself has been complaining, often with good cause, that the press was interfering with its legitimate intelligencegathering functions, particularly in the publishing of the publishing of the pumes of its spies. Here the reporters and others have some responsibility not to subvert their own profession or the essential work of the CIA, but

phone to clear up the mess.— New York Times News Service.

10 MAY 1976

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CERTIFIC RESIDENCE ON MANAGEMENT

Executive Registry

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From James Reston Washington, April 28

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What is troubling about this

simply issue an order to the CIA to stop the practice. Some of us have talked to him privately about it and he does not condone it, nor does he deny the intelligence committee's report that the practice continues.

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Executive Registry

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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

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Executive Registry

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## Knights of Columbus

HARRY PRIBIT SKE Financial Secretary

R. Conroy Scoggins Council 5678

8815 Roos Road

Houston, Texas 77036

MAY 8, 1976

GEORGE BUSH
DIRECTOR
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

DEAR MR. BUSH:

THE MEMBERS OF THIS SMALL KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL IN THE CITY OF HOUSTON WOULD BE VERY HONORED IF YOU WOULD BE SO KIND AS TO WRITE A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE BI-CENTENNIAL FOR THE FRONT PAGE OF OUR JULY MONTHLY PUBLICATION, "THE CHALLENGER," A COPY OF WHICH IS ENCLOSED.

WE HAVE A SMALL COUNCIL OF APPROXIMATELY 250 MEMBERS, BUT OUR MAILING LIST INCLUDES THE TOP OFFICIALS OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS IN THE STAE OF TEXAS.

I AM SURE THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF OUR ORGANIZATION THAT WAS ORIGINATED IN 1882 BY FATHER MICHAEL MCGIVNEY AND NOW HAS MEMBERS IN ALL THE FIFTY STATES, PARTS OF CANADA, SOUTH AMERICA AND THE PHILIPPINES.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE EXTREMELY BUSY BUT WE WANT TO PLEASE ASK YOU TO GIVE US YOUR PERSONAL THOUGHTS ON THE SPIRIT OF THE BITCENTENNIAL YEAR AND INCLUDE A PICTURE OF YOURSELF WHICH WE CAN PUBLISH ALONG WITH YOUR SHORT ARTICLE.

WE THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AND WE ARE IN HOPES THAT THIS LETTER WILL FIND YOU AND YOUR FAMILY IN THE BEST OF HEALTH. THE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL #5678 ARE VERY HAPPY THAT YOU ARE BACK IN THE UNITED STATES AND HOPE THAT YOU MAY HAVE CONTINUED SUCCESS IN YOUR PRESENT POSITION AND WE WISH YOU THE VERY BEST OF LUCK.

MAY WE PLEASE HEAR FROM YOU WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

LARRY BABBITT

EDITOR

THE CHALLENGER

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #5678

P. O. Box 36466

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77036

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